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Letter dated 26 June 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit, annexed hereto, the statement by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo concerning the upsurge in violence in Rwanda and Burundi.

I should be grateful if you would bring the text of this letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council and circulate them as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Atoki **Ileka**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 26 June 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Statement by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo concerning the upsurge in violence in Rwanda and Burundi

The last several weeks have seen a resurgence of violence in Rwanda and Burundi. At the same time, persistent reports, widely carried by the media, are circulating in diplomatic milieux and among some members of the international community.

These reports, which are said to come from Rwandan and Burundian governmental sources, attribute the upsurge to infiltrations from Congolese territory of Interahamwe and ex-Forces Armées Rwandaises forces and even Burundian rebels in these two countries. The authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo are alleged to be facilitating these infiltrations, to the point where some characterize this as exporting the war to Rwanda and Burundi.

In view of the seriousness of the accusations made against the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the emotional weight which they carry, the Government cannot remain passive and is compelled to react.

The Government regards these accusations as completely baseless and as the product of a genuine diversionary tactic.

First, the Government wishes to reaffirm that since the inauguration of Major-General Joseph Kabila as President of the Republic, it has maintained a consistent stance in favour of the peace process. The Government is endeavouring in a completely transparent way to remove all of the aggressors' pretexts for occupying its territory, particularly that of insecurity, which is regularly invoked by the aggressors, specifically, by Rwanda. For this reason, the Government points out that even though the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been subject to aggression, in flagrant violation of international law, it reaffirms its readiness to settle the conflict between it and the three aggressor countries in a peaceful and lasting way.

The Government's good faith in this regard has been reflected in the holding of two summit meetings between President Kabila and President Buyoya in Libreville under the auspices of President Bongo. These meetings made it possible for direct negotiations to begin between President Buyoya and Jean Bosco, leader of the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD).

Well before this, two other meetings were also held between President Kabila and President Kagame, the first in Washington and the second in Arusha.

The contacts established recently at the highest level testify to the complete readiness of President Joseph Kabila to meet his Ugandan, Rwandan and Burundian counterparts in order to discuss the withdrawal of their troops from Congolese territory and the pacification of the region. This is the spirit in which the Congolese President is preparing for his forthcoming meeting with the Ugandan President.

These efforts are in line with the relevant recommendations of the United Nations Security Council and the Political Committee of the Implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement.

Second, the Government is so attached to the principles of inviolability of borders and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries that it will not under any circumstances tolerate the use of its territory as a launching ground for operations aimed at destabilizing neighbouring countries, with which it wishes to remain on good terms. It is in the name of these same principles that the Government is compelled to reaffirm an unswerving solidarity towards the peoples of the occupied territories who are legitimately struggling against aggression and the occupation of a large portion of Congolese territory.

Third, the Government reaffirms its commitment to respect the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and all the relevant Security Council resolutions concerning armed aggression against the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Fourth, the Government reaffirms its desire to cooperate fully with the Joint Military Commission. It undertakes, in accordance with paragraph 8 of Security Council resolution 1341 (2001), to finalize and implement the plans established by the Political Committee for the orderly withdrawal of all foreign forces from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and resettlement or repatriation (DDRRR) of all armed groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. To this end, in accordance with the provisions of Council resolution 1355 (2001) of 15 June 2001, it will provide all the necessary operational information.

In the Government's view, the diversionary tactic is designed to perpetuate the occupation of the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which demonstrates the link between the continuation of hostilities and the pillage and illegal exploitation of our country's resources and wealth.

This campaign is intensifying along with the progress in the peace process initiated by the Lusaka Agreement, conspicuously weakening the link between the progress in the peace process and the economic recovery of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as referred to in paragraph 24 of resolution 1355 (2001).

In fact, this campaign stems from a Machiavellian calculation: the two States fear the effects of a consolidated peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which would force them to democratize their regimes. This strategy of disinformation is reaching insulting proportions for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It aims to portray the latter as a terrorist State; what is more, it slows the momentum towards peace in the Great Lakes region.

In the light of the foregoing, the Government is compelled to point out the following to the international community:

1. **Rwanda and Burundi are making unproven assertions.** The burden of proof is on the accuser. The Congolese Government is convinced that the two countries are simply seeking to get out of their commitments under the Lusaka Agreement, particularly with regard to the withdrawal of their troops from Congolese territory. Moreover, a genuine operation is under way to influence world opinion in order to accomplish unacknowledged goals: continuing to occupy Congolese territory, massive violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, pillage and illegal exploitation of Congolese resources.

2. **The Democratic Republic of the Congo bears no responsibility for the 1994 genocide, which it strongly condemned, and remains in solidarity with**

its victims. It notes that it is still less accountable for the conflict situation in Burundi. It has no hidden agenda with regard to these two countries. The international community, therefore, cannot allow Rwanda and Burundi to use this as an asset to be exploited at will to the detriment of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

3. **The Democratic Republic of the Congo confirms its determination to cooperate with the international community** in seeking out and identifying the perpetrators of the genocide in order to bring them before an international criminal tribunal.

4. **With regard to the recent intensification of violence in Rwanda**, the Government notes that it now stems mainly from two blatant factors reported by authoritative media and observers:

(a) The incursions into Rwanda of Rwandan oppositionists from Ugandan territory with the collusion of the Ugandan authorities themselves. These incursions are part of the fierce conflict between Rwanda and Uganda, as revealed by the three wars in Kisangani;

(b) The operations of Rwandan oppositionists inside Rwanda.

5. **The Government notes that the settlement of the conflict in the Great Lakes region requires a comprehensive solution** which implies that, parallel to the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, a process of reconciliation and dialogue should be initiated without delay in the two countries concerned.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo again turns to the international community, emphatically urging that special attention be paid to the cries and tears of the families of the 2.5 million dead, innocent victims of the war of aggression in the occupied Congolese territories. In memory of these victims, the Government is preparing to transmit to the Security Council a request for the establishment of an international criminal tribunal for the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Lastly, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1355 (2001), the primary responsibility for restoring peace lies with the parties themselves, through measures to build confidence between them. For its part, the Democratic Republic of the Congo will continue to honour its commitments so as to avoid any breach of this confidence, and to lay the groundwork for the return of a durable peace in the interests not only of the Congolese people, but of all the peoples of the Great Lakes region.

Kinshasa, 25 June 2001